



## **Regeneration**

An audio, visual performance by *inastate* improvisation ensemble Church Gallery, Limerick School of Art and Design, Clare Street, Limerick.

12.45 pm. March 8th 2012.

If a group of individuals, brought together through circumstance were asked to collect their favourite paint colour. Then asked to bring their personal selection and mix it with other favourite selections, what colour would this create? For those with paint mixing knowledge or anyone who has witnessed a child who has done this, the colour would inevitably be brown but in each case a different hue would be attained.

So applying this same principle to a sound project entitled "Regeneration", a number of post grad students on MA-SPACE were asked to respond to the title and to apply it in a "socio-political context". The group *inastate* researched the area of sound, looking at texts on Russolo, Schafer, Arquette, Atal, Adams, Cage, the Fluxus conflating psycho-geography, mapping by Kevin Lynch & Frederick Jameson with theoretical foundations of social being and uneven geographical economies.

From the outset the project had the open-ended aim, that of a improvisation performance. This openness thus introduced the element of failure and in turn questions how we all measure success. Was brown the desired colour after all? The questioning of performance as entertainment, sound versus music and so on. The possibility of the embedded title deteriorating through the subjective presented itself too. But here the element of chance is simultaneously exciting and terrifying for this co-authored work. The end piece aims to collate the individual subjective responses in the context of Regeneration manifest in the performance. Creating space for the audience to become attuned to the true aesthetics of listening.

Simultaneous to this, discussions took place around post Celtic Ireland and the residue of abandoned buildings evidenced throughout the island. This is not geographically biased; Ireland suffered this systemic disease all over, in both urban and rural contexts.

The group tested an in-depth enquiry on Schafer's ecology of sound within an urban context, through the method of Sound Walking in Limerick city led by Sean Taylor. This then set the scene for the task that was to be taken on by the twelve individuals. Each "situated" method of aural recording was individually captured on sites personally chosen and loaded with meaning. In urban and rural locations, the common lay between the gaps of empty, unfinished and abandoned sites. Sites where the original aspirations no longer exist but the hope of Regeneration is still possible. The question posited was whether the actual located experience by the individual would and could creatively communicate the theme. Uncertainty prevailed!

Over time it slowly became a matter of focus. By reducing the original sound to its absoluteness, in unison with other absolutes it turns the focus back on the individual subjective ethnographers. The individuals are in common with each other thus creating a community through the shared action of the improvisation. The experience offered is unique, is subjective, allowing for play and intuition, chance and failure.

**The performative improvisation is not a notation piece comparable with a music score that can be repeated. The performers do not read instructions like the descriptive "event scores" by Yoko Ono. They play intuitively, acting and reacting to each played stimulus. It is not replicable and offers up a unique experiential moment when the audience participant can listen and ponder whether the allegorical nature of the piece is intentional or not. The audience participant is an active part of the whole experiential moment.**